

PLATE V.—THE CHIPSTEAD ELM

In the scale of precedence among Forest trees, the Elm, which is indigenous with respect to beauty and utility, to claim a place next to the Oak in dignity and property, as regards the usefulness of its timber, is that of being able to bear the moisture, without rotting; which renders it more especially fit for all purposes connected to the atmosphere. The hardness of its grain is another quality that adds to its value; forming, as it may do, a substitute for hay and fodder, in times of dearth, and being forgotten; frequently fed his cattle on the leaves of the Elm; hence Virgil remarks among its excellencies:

“Fecunde frondibus Ulmi.”

No tree bears transplanting better than the Elm. It will suffer removal even renders it very desirable for those who may wish to impart to new-built mansions the shade, of apparently long standing, always confer on a habitation. The Elm, in fact, “the length of colonnade,” with which our forefathers loved to make graceful hospitable halls. Loving society, yet averse from a crowd, delighting in fresh roots, and affording its aid to all the weaker plants in its vicinity that may seek its emblem of the class of country gentlemen, whose abodes it is oftenest found to adorn.

The Chipstead Elm stands on a rising ground, in a retired part of the pleasure Esq., of Chipstead Place, in Kent. It is sixty feet high; twenty feet in circumference at fifteen feet eight inches, at three feet and a half from the ground. It contains two large branches towards the centre. Its venerable trunk is richly mantled with ivy, savours enough of antiquity to bear out the tradition annexed to it, that in the time held annually under its branches; the high road from Rye, in Sussex, to London, will that interest, which must be felt for an object by associating it even in the most so renowned in history as that of our fifth Henry, be lessened by the reflection present owner a descendant of John Hampden, and one in whom both the patriotic of that illustrious individual find no unworthy representative.

PLATE VI.—THE TUTBURY WYCH

THE WYCH-ELM, or Wych Hazel, as it is sometimes called, from the resemblance of its shoots bear to those of the Hazel, is a species of the Elm, which is valuable rather than the quality of it. Since the long bow, for the making of which it was much used, has fallen entirely into disuse, its worth is proportionally lessened. It is, however, occasionally to a prodigious size. The Tutbury Wych-Elm is one of the most remarkable in the kingdom, and is thus mentioned by Shaw, in his History of Staffordshire: “Tutbury to Rolleston is a very large and beautiful Wych-Elm, the bole of which is high and lofty; having eight noble branches, the size of common trees, which spread luxuriantly around, forming a magnificent and graceful feature, both in the near and distant view. It is not at present, will, in a few years, be as great a curiosity in the vegetable world as it is at present, described by Doctor Plot.”

The trunk of this tree is twelve feet long, and sixteen feet nine inches in circumference at seven feet from the ground; seven feet higher, it divides into the “eight noble branches,” which extend between forty and fifty feet from the centre of the tree, which contain nine cubic feet of timber. The interest that so beautiful an object is likely to excite in the present instance, increased by the pleasing prospect that it presents, which lifts its venerable remains in the distance, and awakens a train of interesting remembrance of the virtues of one of its earliest owners, “Time-honored Lancashire, which it has been exposed, during the ages that have now left it only the vestiges of feudal greatness.”